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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 000177

SIPDIS

NP/CBM
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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [ETTC](#) [KSCA](#) [MNUC](#) [KNNP](#) [KN](#) [NI](#) [MTCRE](#)

SUBJECT: PREVENTING NIGERIAN MISSILE-RELATED COOPERATION
WITH NORTH KOREA

REF: A. STATE 19874

[B](#). ABUJA 149

Classified By: CDA RICK L. ROBERTS FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) February 4, CDA delivered demarche (REF A) on Nigerian missile-related cooperation with North Korea to President Obasanjo's National Security Advisor, LTG (ret.) Aliyu Mohammed Gusau. CDA explained the seriousness with which the USG views North Korean missile and WMD programs, and asked the NSA to clarify statements made by Vice President Atiku's spokesman January 28 referring to the transfer of ballistic missiles or missile technology to Nigeria.

[1](#)2. (C) The NSA denied, in the strongest terms, any Nigerian interest in acquiring missiles and/or missile technology from North Korea. He claimed North Korea had offered to sell missiles and/or missile technology, but the GON had turned the offer down. The NSA commented that Nigeria's strategic interests are mainly in the West African sub-region and ballistic missiles were simply not necessary to further those interests. He went on to say that Nigeria was at peace with its neighbors in the sub-region and pointed out that even the long-festering border dispute with Cameroon was now being settled amicably under the auspices of the United Nations. The NSA commented the GON had better things to spend its money on than ballistic missiles.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: The NSA's statements track with what other senior GON officials have told us, but not necessarily with what the Nigerians are telling the North Koreans (Ref B). North Korea will likely continue to attempt to expand its relationship with Nigeria in the near term and Nigeria will probably be all too happy to accept any free assistance (economic or military) that North Korea doles out.

[1](#)4. (C) Other countries have tasked their missions here to make similar demarches, including at least the UK, France and China. Like us, they are hearing strong denials from their Nigerian interlocutors. Like us (Ref B), they believe Nigeria deliberately left the MOU open to North Korean missile ties -- without necessarily wanting to follow through on purchases -- in order to keep that option and in the meantime get as much else as it can from the North Koreans.
END COMMENT.

Roberts